

REMARKS

The present application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated June 9, 2005, in which all the pending claims received a final rejection. A Request for Continued Examination (RCE) Transmittal was filed herewith.

Claims 1-5, 11-15, and 19-23 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 11, and 19 are in independent form. Claims 1, 4, 11, 14, 19, and 22 have been amended to define Applicant's invention more clearly. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

The Office Action states that Claims 1-5, 11-15, and 19-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,313,812 (Nagano et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,594,509 (Florin et al.), and over Florin et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,949,351 (Hahm). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and submit that independent Claims 1, 11, and 19, together with the claims dependent therefrom, are patentably distinct from the cited references for at least the following reasons.

The present invention generally relates to a system, a method, and an apparatus that facilitates how a network of devices may be controlled. The network of devices may be, for example, a home network in which each device may have its own graphical user interface for controlling that device. One problem with conventional home networks is that the connected devices may have mutually different operating environments from other connected devices. This requires complicated operations and/or a lengthy operating procedure to control or operate the networked devices. The present invention addresses this and other deficiencies in conventional home networks.

An aspect of the present invention, set forth in Claim 1, is directed to a control system that includes a control apparatus and an operation apparatus. The control apparatus functions to receive an operation panel for operating a controlled apparatus from the controlled apparatus and to display the operation panel on a display unit. The operation apparatus includes a first operation unit for operating the operation panel and a second operation unit for operating a specific function of the controlled apparatus.

The control apparatus includes a receiving unit and a control unit. The receiving unit functions to receive a control signal from the operation apparatus, and the control unit functions to determine whether to transmit a first command for operating the operation panel or a second command for operating the specific function from the control apparatus to the controlled apparatus. The control unit determines, according to the control signal, whether the first operation unit or the second operation unit is being operated. If the control unit determines that the first operation unit is being operated, the control unit transmits the first command from the control apparatus to the controlled apparatus. If the control unit determines that the second operation unit is being operated, the control unit transmits the second command from the control apparatus to the controlled apparatus.

A notable feature of Claim 1 is that the control unit determines whether to transmit the first command or the second command from the control apparatus to the controlled apparatus, based on whether the first operation unit or the second operation unit is being operated. The first command is for operating the operation panel received from the controlled apparatus, and the first command is transmitted if the control unit determines that the first operation unit is being operated. The second command is for operating the specific function of

the controlled apparatus, and the second command is transmitted if the control unit determines that the second operation unit is being operated. Support for this feature may be found, for example, in Fig. 14 and the corresponding description thereof starting on page 25, line 17, of the Substitute Specification submitted on March 24, 2004. By virtue of this feature, a user may easily control the first operation unit and the second operation unit through the control unit of the control apparatus.

Nagano et al. relates to a controller for controlling a plurality of audio/visual (A/V) equipment. The Office Action alleges that Nagano et al. discloses all the features of Claim 1 except for “an operation apparatus having a second operation unit for operating a specific function of the controlled apparatus and transmit the command from the control apparatus to the controlled apparatus if it determined that the second operation is being operated.” The Office Action then proposes that Florin et al. remedies the deficiencies of Nagano et al.

Florin et al. relates to an A/V transceiver connected to A/V devices including a television and/or telephone cable, a TV, a VCR, and other A/V devices. Apparently, Florin et al. teaches that the A/V transceiver switches data between a program/service provider and the A/V devices. The Office Action alleges that Florin et al. teaches “a control unit(54) determining, according to the control signal, whether the first operation unit(134, pointing operation)(see figure 5a and column 12, lines 20-32) or the second operation(160)(see figure 5a and column 12, lines 37-45) is being operated, and transmitting the command from the control apparatus(54) to the controlled apparatus (56 or 57) if it determined that the second operation (recording, rewinding, stop, play; etc.) is being operated(see figures 1-2, 4a-5a; column 8, lines 31-64; column 12, lines 20-32 and lines 37-45).” The Office Action further alleges that it “would have

been obvious to have modified Nagano et al with the teaching of Florin et al, so as to provide a more power operation apparatus to a user.”

The Office Action further alleges that Florin et al. discloses all the features of Claim 1 except that Florin et al. “fail to disclose a cursor on an operation panel and changing the operation panel according to data transmitted from the controlled apparatus.” The Office Action then proposes that Hahm remedies the deficiencies of Florin et al., and that it “would have been obvious to have modified Florin et al. with the teaching of Hahm, so as to provide and indication(cursor) to notify a user which position has been activated on a display and update display information on the operation panel.”

Hahm is understood to relate to a remote controlling apparatus that wirelessly transmits data between a controlled apparatus and a controlling apparatus.

Applicants submit that any permissible combination of Nagano et al. with Florin et al. or Florin et al. with Hahm would fail to teach or suggest a control system that includes “a control unit adapted to determine whether to transmit a first command for operating the operation panel or a second command for operating the specific function from said control apparatus to the controlled apparatus,” wherein “the control unit is adapted to determine, according to the control signal, whether the first operation unit or the second operation unit is being operated,” and wherein “the control unit is adapted to transmit the first command from said control apparatus to the controlled apparatus, if it is determined that the first operation unit is being operated, and to transmit the second command from said control apparatus to the controlled apparatus if it is determined that the second operation unit is being operated,” as recited in Claim 1.

As conceded in the Office Action, Nagano et al. fails to disclose an operation apparatus having a second operation unit for operating a specific function of a controlled apparatus. Accordingly, Nagano et al. fails to disclose a control unit "adapted to transmit . . . the second command from said control apparatus to the controlled apparatus if it is determined that the second operation unit is being operated."

Applicants respectfully submit that Florin et al. fails to remedy the deficiencies of Nagano et al., because Florin et al. fails to disclose or suggest the claimed control unit. Reference numeral 54 of Florin et al. corresponds to a transceiver, which the Office Action alleges to correspond to the claimed control unit as well as the claimed control apparatus. However, nothing has been found in Florin et al. that is believed to disclose or suggest that the transceiver 54 determines whether to transmit a first command or a second command from the control apparatus (i.e., transceiver 54) to a controlled apparatus, based on whether a first operation unit or a second operation unit is being operated. The first command is for operating the operation panel received from the controlled apparatus and is transmitted if the control unit determines that the first operation unit is being operated. The second command is for operating the specific function of the controlled apparatus and is transmitted if the control unit determines that the second operation unit is being operated.

Additionally, Florin et al. discloses a control button group 160, which includes a record button 162, a rewind button 164, a stop button 166, and a play/pause button 168, and a fast-forward button 170 (see column 12, lines 37-45). Even assuming, *arguendo*, that the claimed operating apparatus corresponds to the remote control unit 60 of Florin et al., and the claimed second operation unit corresponds to the control button group 160 of Florin et al., as

apparently asserted in the Office Action, this hypothetical construction would not disclose or suggest that the second operation unit (the control button group 160) is “for operating a specific function of the controlled apparatus,” as claimed in Claim 1. This is because the various buttons of the control button group 160 do not necessarily operate a specific function of a controlled apparatus. In particular, when a user presses the record button 162, a record panel is displayed confirming the program’s title and length. Also displayed is “a highlighted select icon and confirmation of which A/V device and type to use for recording.” That is, the record button 162 of the control button group 160 (i.e., the alleged second operation unit) provides an operation panel that requires further selection by the user. This clearly is not even suggestive of operating a specific function of a controlled apparatus.

Nothing has been found in Hahm that is believed to remedy the deficiencies of Florin et al. or Nagano et al. The Office Action cites Hahm for teaching a pointing device for controlling the movement of a cursor on an operation panel.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is patentable over the cited references, and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). Independent Claims 11 and 19 include a feature similar to that discussed above in connection with Claim 1. Therefore, those claims also are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above.

The other rejected claims in the present application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and therefore are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim also is deemed to define an additional aspect of

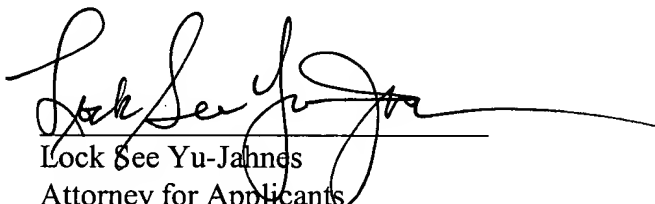
the invention, individual consideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

CONCLUSION

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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